

NSC
15 MAY 75
(DCI's copy)

15 May 1975

DCI BRIEFING FOR
15 MAY NSC MEETING

REACTIONS TO MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT

I. Mr. President, we have no reactions from Communist authorities in Phnom Penh to the US military operation beyond what we had last night. In his statement on Phnom Penh radio at that time, Information Minister Hu Nimm was noticeably defensive in rationalizing the seizure of the vessel.

A. Although he did claim that the Mayaguez was on an intelligence mission, he stated several times that his government had no desire to stage "provocations" and that the Mayaguez had only been halted for "questioning."

International Reactions

II. In the aftermath of the US military operation, the Thai cabinet today ^{apparently} decided to expel a "senior member of the US mission," and to recall the Thai ambassador in Washington for consultations.

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- A. Thai newspapers today are also urging that the government:
 - publicize all agreements between the US and Thailand, and
 - immediately close down all US bases in Thailand.
- B. Leftist politicians are now holding a rally in Bangkok. They reportedly intend to demand that all US troops leave Thailand within 10 days.
 - 1. The political left apparently believes that the time is right to create a political crisis for the Khukrit government.
 - 2. Organizers of the demonstration plan to move crowds to both the prime minister's office and the US embassy.



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- III. In Peking's first reaction to the US military action, Vice Premier Li Hsien-nien has accused the US of an "outright act of piracy."
 - A. Speaking at a banquet in Peking today, Li said

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that "when an American ship invaded Cambodia's territorial waters, Cambodia took legitimate measures against the ship to safeguard her state sovereignty." Li added that "the US went so far as to make an issue of the matter" and bombed Cambodian territory and ships.

B. Li said the American action "should be condemned by world public opinion."

IV. Hanoi radio has characterized the operation as a "flagrant act of piracy" which shows that the US still has not "learned from its defeats in Vietnam and Cambodia."

A. The new government in Saigon has not commented, but it can be expected to parrot Hanoi's line.

V. Soviet media continue to report the events surrounding the Mayaguez incident from foreign wire services without editorial comment.

A. East European commentary remains muted. The Yugoslav press has even referred to the Mayaguez as a "kidnapped" US vessel.

B. The Cuban press has so far treated US actions in a factual manner, but we have no comment since

the US operation was completed.

- VI. A Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman has stated that "a container ship on open waters must not be subject to seizure" and that his government viewed the US military action as "limited."
- VII. In most major Western countries there has been little official reaction.
 - A. British and West German press comment has ~~also~~ been generally supportive.
 - B. Press reaction from South Korea, Taiwan, and Australia has been favorable.

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